The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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LABOR'S GOAL!
To Repeal
Taft-Hartley Law

WHOLE NO. 1954 | WILLIAM GREEN, President | WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 1948 | GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer | VOL. 38, NO. 38

Housing Starts Drop Sharply In August, To Continue Trend Evident Since April

Washington.—The number of new houses started in August dropped 12 percent below the July level to continue, at an accelerated pace, the decline in new home building activity in evidence over the past 4 months.

The 83,000 units started in August was 11,000 below the July total and 3,300 under the number started in August of last year, according to figures released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The BLS report on the physical volume of home construction contrasts sharply with an earlier report on dollar value which showed that August was a record-breaking month. The conflict between the reports demonstrates the effect of high prices in the industry. While fewer houses were under construction in August, the value of construction put in place soared to record levels 38 percent greater than the valuation reported for August, 1947.

In addition to a decline in the number of homes actually started, the BLS reported a substantial drop in the number of building permits issued for later construction. Among cities reporting a decrease were: Baltimore, Columbus, Kansas City (Mo.), Los Angeles, Memphis, Norfolk, Seattle and Upper Darby, Pa.

The peak month for housing starts was April, when 98,800 units were under way. Since that time there has been a steady decline, especially in California and Texas. In urban areas alone, the number of new dwelling units authorized for construction decreased by 26 percent from April to July in California, and 27 percent in Texas. For the past 3 years, these 2 states have accounted for a considerable portion of the national total of new houses started.

The total number of homes begun this year in the first 8 months is still running well ahead of 1947. The BLS report states that thus far in 1948 646,000 new permanent units have been put under construction, or 24 percent more than in the comparable period for 1947.

In the building permit field, the report declared that Los Angeles, New York, and Detroit led all other cities this year as well as in 1947 in the total number of permits issued during the first 8 months. However, Detroit, San Antonio, and Fort Worth reported fewer permits issued this year than in 1947.

Tips On Food Utilization Given In U.S. Publication

Washington.—Useful tips on the selection and utilization of foods are offered housewives, plagued by high prices and shortages, in the monthly Plentiful Food List issued by the Production and Marketing Administration of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Each month the bulletin lists the food items which are expected to be in common use, generally available, and in plentiful supply. Because of these factors, the department says, the foods listed usually offer consumers more for their dollar than alternative foods which are less plentiful.

Featured on the October list are sweet potatoes, onions, and peanut butter. In addition, the following foods are listed: Citrus fruits, cranberries, grapes, canned apricots, canned citrus juices, canned grapefruit segments, canned apple products, prunes, raisins, figs, cabbage, carrots, Irish potatoes, canned tomato products, fruit spreads, tree nuts, honey, and fresh and frozen fish.

In addition to a listing of the plentiful foods, the department bulletin contains useful tips on the selection, handling and preparation of the featured items. The October food headliners are treated in part as follows:

"1. Sweet potatoes: Whether fresh or cured, sweet potatoes do not keep exceptionally well in the home and should be used fairly quickly. They should not be placed in the refrigerator because, just as with bananas, they will turn black, impairing their eating qualities. As a vegetable there are many uses for sweet potatoes: baked, steamed, boiled, candied, fried, and mashed. They will cook into delicious pies, cakes, and the host of desserts found in any good cook book.

"2. Onions: Onions add zestful flavor, and are probably the most important seasoning in food preparation. A cool weather treat is potato and onion soup, an old favorite. The onion itself is tasty, whether boiled, fried, baked, pickled, or stewed. Best quality onions are mature, bright, clean, hard, and well shaped, with dry skins and without a developed seed stem. Domestic (late crop) onions have yellow, red, or white skins. The "whites" are usually milder in flavor.

"3. Peanut butter: With the children back in school, consumers will want plenty of peanut butter, particularly for sandwiches. Peanut butter and enriched bread together provide the growing child with food energy (calories), minerals, thiamin, riboflavin, and niacin. Peanut butter provides a generous amount of inexpensive protein, which is otherwise found mainly in foods which are in short supply and considerably higher in price. It is easy to keep, and blends particularly well in sandwiches with jellies, chopped vegetables and dried fruit or most left-overs. Peanut butter cookies are a special delight. And there is a variety of other dishes such as: baked apples with peanut butter topping, stuffed sweet potatoes with peanut butter, peanut butter sauce for vegetables, peanut butter biscuits, muffins, bread, griddle cakes, and peanut butter salad dressing.

Plans Completed for President's Conference on Industrial Safety

Washington.—Plans are practically complete for the organizational meeting of the President's Conference on Industrial Safety, scheduled for Washington.

Maurice J. Tobin, recently appointed Secretary of Labor is general chairman of the conference; Vincent P. Ahearn, executive secretary of the National Sand and Gravel Association, is executive director, and William L. Connolly, director of the Bureau of Labor Standards is chairman of the over-all coordinating committee.

Steering groups from the seven technical committees comprising the conference have held meetings in Washington during the past 10 days to prepare action programs for the complete committees' consideration at the forthcoming conclave.

Secretary Tobin will address the conference on "Labor's Interest in Industrial Safety"; Admiral Ross T. McIntire, U. S. N. (retired), will speak on "Rehabilitation of the Injured Worker," and Carl Jansen, president of the Dravo Corp., Pittsburgh, will speak on "Management's Interest in Industrial Safety."

The preliminary organizational conference will be followed by a comprehensive, nation-wide meeting in March of 1949, to which representatives of all interested groups throughout the country will be invited.

Present plans call for a permanent organization, extending to all parts of the country, with an integrated, sustained program designed to reduce the toll of 2,000,000 injured, 17,000 killed, and 91,000 permanently disabled by industrial accidents during 1947.

AFL PACT GEARS WAGES TO COST-OF-LIVING INDEX

Cincinnati.—Over 3,500 members of 13 AFL unions are affected by a new agreement negotiated with the Cincinnati Hotels Association which gears wage adjustments to the cost-of-living index.

Under the wage clause, workers pay may increase without limit and may decrease as much as 10 percent. Any indicated decrease beyond 10 percent requires further negotiation.

Another contract provision makes the 40-hour week effective on January 1, 1949, for all employes. Miscellaneous kitchen workers and building service employes are now on a 44-hour schedule.

An additional increase of $5 is effective Sept. 1.

The new contract calls for a wage scale of $87 a week for day work, $91 a week for night work, and $93.50 for the lobster shift. The previous scale was $74 for day work, $78 nights and $90.50 for the lobster shift.

AFL PRINTERS' CONTRACT PROVIDES $13 PAY HIKE

Albany, N. Y.—A contract providing for a $13 weekly pay increase was signed here by the AFL International Typographical Union and 2 Albany newspapers.

William A. Hazell, state labor mediator, said that the union members would receive an $8 weekly pay increase retroactive to Nov. 1, 1947, the date the previous contract expired.

WE HAVE
THE VOTES
LET'S
USE
THEM

IF YOU LOOK AT IT RIGHT YOU CAN SEE THAT LABOR IS ON TOP
80TH CONGRESS
COST OF LIVING
LABOR

Nonfarm Employment Put at 45,514,000; Continued Boom Brought August Rise

Washington.—The number of workers in nonfarm establishments rose 440,000 in a month to reach a new record high of 45,514,000 as of mid-August, according to a report released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Expansion of seasonal activities, reopening of plants after vacation shutdowns, and greater availability of materials were the prime factors behind the increase, the BLS said.

Three years after VJ-Day, nonfarm employment totaled nearly 5,500,000 above the August, 1945, level. Except for the federal government, all industry divisions now employ more workers than at the end of the war. Much of the gain over the 3-year period has taken place in the trade-finance-service divisions, which have increased their employment by more than 3,000,000. The manufacturing industries now employ a million more workers than in August, 1945, but are still well below their wartime peak. While state and local governments have substantially increased their employment over the VJ-Day level, the federal government has dropped over a million workers during the postwar period.

Mid-August, 1948, employment on contract construction totaled 2,250,000, a new peacetime high. As building activity approaches its seasonal high, the monthly rate of increase has slowed somewhat; only 33,000 workers were added in August.

The largest increase during the month took place in the manufacturing industries, where a gain of 300,000 workers raised the total to about 16,500,000—the highest peacetime level on record. Most of the gain was in the nondurable goods division with all industry groups sharing in the increase over the month. The textile-apparel-leather group, having recovered from the seasonal slow-down, increased their workforce by about 160,000. The total remained slightly below the March level, however. The apparel group, which accounted for most of the August gain, surpassed the March figure. While cotton, silk and rayon plants reported a significant increase during the month, there was a further small decline in woolen and worsted mills, primarily due to work stoppages.

The food group showed a smaller than usual increase in August, as the seasonal expansion in fruit and vegetable canning was partly offset by sharp declines in the meatpacking and dairy industries.

The iron and steel group accounted for the largest increase within the durable goods division. A further seasonal expansion of the lumber group was largely concentrated on the West Coast, with other regions indicating some decline. Production for the fall and winter season raised employment in the furniture industries, which had been affected by a prolonged slack season earlier in the year.

An employment decline in the automotive group was largely the result of strikes in some suppliers' plants and consequent layoffs in assembly operations. Increases in locomotive and car building shops were offset by a further drop in shipyard employment.

Series of Radio Broadcasts To be Offered by ILGWU

New York.—David Dubinsky, president of the AFL's International Ladies Garment Workers Union, announced that the union will sponsor a series of 4 nation-wide broadcasts as part of its political campaign to get out the labor vote and to insure the defeat of labor's enemies in Congress.

The programs, which will be heard on October 7, 14, 21, and 28 over the American Broadcasting Company network from 10 to 10:15 p.m. Eastern Time, are made possible by the voluntary contributions of ILGWU members who are backing the union's educational activities in the political field.

Each Thursday evening program will feature the address of a prominent labor or political leader well-known throughout the nation. Headlining the list of speakers who have been invited to participate in the broadcasts are: President Harry S. Truman and Alben W. Barkley, Democratic candidates for the offices of President and Vice-President of the United States; Maurice J. Tobin, Secretary of Labor, and Hubert Humphrey, mayor of Minneapolis.

U. S. Union Membership Put At 15,600,000 In New Directory Issued By Labor Dept.

Washington.—One out of every 4 workers in the nation's labor force, or 1 out of every 6 persons aged 21 or over, is a union member, according to union membership data compiled by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

This fact was revealed with the publication of a new bulletin entitled, "Directory of Labor Unions in the United States," which lists a total of 197 national and international unions and 89 state and territorial labor organizations with a membership of 15,600,000.

Thirty-seven of the national and international unions listed in the directory each have more than 100,000 members, while 6 have more than 500,000. At the opposite end of the scale, 16 unions reported less than 1,000 members. About half of the unions have less than 100 locals each. Fifteen unions, on the other hand, have 1,000 or more subordinate locals or lodges.

This year's directory also includes a brief discussion of the labor movement since World War II, with an analysis of union membership and size. For each individual union, in addition to the union official title, address, and principal officers, information is given on the frequency of conventions, the union's official publication and its research and education department.

The principal officers, headquarters and publication for each of the 89 AFL and CIO state and territorial offices are also presented. A finding index which lists each union by its full official title, and the page of the directory on which it can be found, completes the directory.

Orders for the "Directory of Labor Unions in the United States" (BLS Bulletin No. 937) may be placed with the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C. The price is 20 cents per copy.

AFL TELEGRAPHERS ELECT STEINBRENNER

Boston.—Henry G. Steinbrenner of Chicago was elected national vice-president of the Western Union division of the AFL's Commercial Telegraphers Union at its 8th annual convention here.

Ruling Deferred On Motion To Quash ITU Contempt Case

NLRB Attacks Clauses Regulating Hiring As Hearings Open

Indianapolis.—The AFL's International Typographical Union, defending itself against a contempt of court action brought by Robert N. Denham, general counsel for the National Labor Relations Board, was denied an immediate ruling on its motion to dismiss the proceedings.

Federal Judge Luther M. Swygert, who issued an injunction against the union last March, opened hearings on the NLRB charge that the union has violated the injunction and the Taft-Hartley law by insisting on a closed shop in face of the law's ban on that form of union security.

In answer to the charge ITU attorneys, Henry Kaiser and Gerhard Van Arkel, filed a brief with Judge Swygert maintaining that the union cannot be held in contempt of court because an NLRB trial examiner has already found the ITU not guilty of the alleged violations.

The union brief maintained that the court lacks jurisdiction to hear the contempt action and that "the conduct complained of" as being in contempt of the injunction is not covered in the injunction's terms.

The union said Mr. Denham, at a hearing before a NLRB trial examiner, had raised charges of Taft-Hartley violations by the union since the injunction was granted. The union added that the examiner, Arthur Leff, had found no evidence to justify the charges.

"The general counsel, having elected to try these matters before a trial examiner of the board, who has rendered a decision on them favorable to the respondents, has elected his remedy and is now estopped from bringing this action," said the union's motion.

The ITU motion further asserted, in part:

"So patently weak is" the contempt action of the general counsel "that he is forced to rely either on matters already litigated and found to be proper by the trial examiner to whom they were presented, and thus to engage respondents in a vexatious second course of litigation, or . . . to rely on matters not covered in the injunction case, not touched by the decree, and not even a subject of complaint before the board.

"We submit that in addition to calling for summary dismissal of the petition, that conduct merits the condemnation of the court."

At the opening hearing, NLRB lawyers introduced a witness who testified that he and 4 others had been admitted into the union after they had had less than 2 years experience as teletypesetters. The evidence is expected to be important to the NLRB in its attack upon competency tests written into hiring clauses sought by the ITU.

Judge Swygert's injunction forbids the union and its officers from doing anything that would discriminate against persons seeking employment because of nonmembership in the union.

Under the ITU's contract clauses, union members would be regarded as competent journeyman printers but others would have to take an examination. The union has contended that the purpose of this clause is to maintain as far as possible a high degree of skill in the journeyman classification. It has further contended that union membership was evidence of such competence by reason of the long apprentice training and examination which its members undergo.

Mr. Van Arkel objected unsuccessfully to questions about the witness' admission to the union without a training course. He contended the issue had been tried by the NLRB general counsel before a trial examiner. The trial examiner refused to condemn the competency clauses and Mr. Van Arkel contended the general counsel could not force the union into duplicate litigation.

LLPE Hails Labor Victory In Maine As Repudiation of T-H Law Sponsors

Washington.—The repudiation of the vicious antilabor laws by the people of Maine who voted 112,005 to 43,419 against the measures was hailed by Labor's League for Political Education as a "repudiation of the Republican leaders of the 80th Congress who sponsored the Taft-Hartley law."

In a statement issued by its administrative committee, the national LLPE praised the effective work of the Maine branch of the political organization in fighting the measures and in bringing about the defeat of one of the sponsors of the state legislation.

Following is the text of the statement issued here:

"The American people have not been informed of the real significance of the recent Maine elections. That story was either missed or suppressed by the newspapers throughout the country.

"The voters in Republican Maine repealed the state's "Little Taft-Hartley Act" by a vote of 112,005 to 43,419.

"The Republican candidates who won sweeping victories in the Maine election had come out publicly in the campaign in opposition to this antilabor legislation. By so doing, they repudiated the Republican leaders of the 80th Congress who sponsored the Taft-Hartley Act. Even Mrs. Margaret Chase Smith, the Senator-elect from Maine, who had voted as a Representative for the Taft-Hartley Act, came out against the state's "Little Taft-Hartley Act," thereby reversing her previous position.

"In Maine the substance of the national Taft-Hartley Act was embodied in two bills, known as the Barlow bill and the Tabb bill. Both appeared on the ballot for a decision by the voters. The referendum carried a provision that if one of the bills obtained an even one-third vote it would go on the ballot again for another referendum in 1950. This bill failed to get one-third of the vote, so that all of the antilabor provisions contained in both measures are dead in Maine.

"In addition, State Senator Tabb, who introduced the Tabb bill in the legislature, was defeated for reelection by a Democrat in a consistently Republican district.

"These results were obtained as the result of an extremely active campaign by labor under the auspices of the Maine branch of Labor's League for Political Education. Our national league congratulates the state organization in Maine for its highly effective job."

Some of the statements made by candidates in the Maine election follow:

Mrs. Margaret Chase Smith said:

"I am opposed to the Barlow bill as I do not think it is workable or sound. I am going to vote against it."

The Democratic senatorial candidate Dr. Adrian H. Scolten issued the following statement:

"The Barlow-Tabb bills have no excuse for being promoted in Maine. These bills can only disrupt and seriously injure the present harmonious relationship between Maine labor and management."

The Republican candidate for governor, Frederick G. Payne, issued the following statement:

"Our record in Maine of cooperation between labor and industry is an enviable one. It is not my feeling that we need this type of legislation."

The Democratic candidate for governor, Louis B. Lausler, said:

"In my opinion both these bills are unconstitutional and any such legislation is not conducive to industrial peace. The electorate should deny approval of any such legislation."

Labor can now take the position that in asking Congress to repeal the Taft-Hartley Act it is only asking Congress to do what the conservative state of Maine has already done by a popular vote.

$2 Million Pay Increase Won by AFL Textile Union

Elizabethton, Tenn.—Anthony Valente, president of the AFL's United Textile Workers of America, announced that an agreement has been reached with the American Bemberg and North American Rayon Corporations whereby all production and non-supervisory employes will receive a general wage increase averaging approximately 17 cents per hour.

The increase, which will benefit some 5,300 workers to the tune of approximately 2 million dollars yearly, will be retroactive to September 1, 1948, and will be applied as follows: All production and non-supervisory employes will receive a general increase of 15 cents per hour. Some 1,200 workers who are employed in the chemical department will receive an additional 5 cents per hour, or an over-all increase of 20 cents per hour to compensate them for the new production techniques which the corporations are planning to put into operation.

Assisting Mr. Valente in the negotiations, which have been going on for the past 3 weeks, were Joseph Jacobs, southern director of the UTWA; C. C. Collins, vice-president of the UTWA, and workers' committees headed by Ruben Carden, president, and Harry Hyder, business agent, of Local Union 2207, and Harris Bristol, president, and E. E. Davidson, vice-president, of Clerical Workers Local Union 2614. The corporations were represented by Lew Taylor, personnel director.

The union contract, which was to expire September 1, 1949, was terminated last week and renewed when a satisfactory agreement was reached on the wage issue. The new contract will now run until September 1, 1950, and provides for another general wage reopening on September 1, 1949.

The agreement was presented to an overflow meeting of the 2 local unions by President Valente at which time the UTWA members voted by an overwhelming majority to accept. After the agreement had been acted upon, the membership of both local unions, after hearing President Valente make a plea for the necessity of building up a UTWA war-chest, also voted to pay a defense tax to the International Union of 10 cents per member per month.

Trowel Trades Lead Building Groups In Increasing Number of Apprentices

Montreal.—The percentage increase during the past year in the number of apprentices employed was greater in the trowel trades than in any other of the building trades, William F. Patterson, director, Bureau of Apprenticeship, U. S. Department of Labor said.

In an address at the convention of the Operative Plasterers' and Cement Finishers' International Association of the United States and Canada Patterson stated:

"On August 1, 1947, there were 13,574 and on August 1 of this year there were 18,628 apprentices working in the trowel trades. This represents a gain of 38 percent during the 12-months period.

"The large increase is of special significance as there has been a shortage of craftsmen in the trowel trades in some areas. This expansion is greatly due to the good cooperation which exists between the unions, contractor associations, state apprenticeship councils and the Bureau of Apprenticeship for the development of skilled workers, not only in the trowel trades but in all the building crafts."

Stressing the necessity of the best possible training for apprentices, Patterson said:

"Only high quality apprenticeship will produce the all-around skilled workers industry needs and will enable apprentices to become fully qualified journeymen. The quality of apprenticeship can be raised by more careful selection of applicants for training, thus reducing the turnover among apprentices; by improving the job training and the related classroom instruction. This is being accomplished in a number of cities in the various building trades by the employment of a full-time supervisor of apprentices whose salary is paid by a union, contractors or both groups," Patterson said.

LLPE PUBLICATION SHOWS VOTE RECORD

Washington.—Of considerable interest to all union members is a pamphlet issued by Labor's League for Political Education, entitled "The Record They Stand On."

This 16-page booklet contains the congressional voting record on 12 key roll calls including the Taft-Hartley Act, the Case Bill, rent control, taxes, housing, etc.

Local union political education committees which have not received copies of this publication may write to Labor's League for Political Education, 1525 H St. N. W., Washington 5, D. C.

TRADE UNION GROUPS PLEDGE SUPPORT FOR ERP

Paris.—Support for the European Recovery Program was pledged by 5 European trade union groups in Labor Day messages sent to American labor organizations through the office of W. Averell Harriman, special U. S. representative for the Economic Cooperation Administration.

The messages were relayed to the United States in a special broadcast participated in by Boris Shishkin, AFL economist, who is now serving as labor adviser to Mr. Harriman.

Organizations sending messages were the Workers Force of France, the Christian Syndical Organizations of Italy, the British Trade Unions Congress, the Swedish Confederation of Trade Unions and the Council of Trade Unions of the Netherlands.

The Workers Force greeting from France, said it "takes this occasion to express the gratitude of the French workers for the voluntary sacrifices which the American workers are making in aiding the task of European reconstruction."

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AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE
SUPPLEMENT

LABOR'S GOAL!
To Repeal
Taft-Hartley Law

WILLIAM GREEN, President
WASHINGTON, D. C., FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1948
GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer

Green Says NLRB Case Against ITU Most 'Shocking' Tried Under T-H Law

St. Louis.—AFL President William Green declared that "nothing more shocking has yet been attempted under the Taft-Hartley law" than the effort on the part of the National Labor Relations Board's general counsel, Robert N. Denham, to break the Chicago printers' strike by seeking the aid of a U. S. District Court.

In an address before the convention of the AFL's Bridge and Structural Ironworkers' International Association here, Mr. Green assailed Senator Robert A. Taft for his influence in persuading NLRB attorneys to bring contempt of court action against the International Typographical Union, and for seeking to broaden the terms of the injunction issued last March against the printers to forbid the payment of benefits to union members on strike against Chicago newspaper publishers.

"This is a case of the government asking the courts to help break a strike by starving out the wives and children of the strikers," he charged.

"It illustrates, more powerfully than anything else could, the evil nature of the Taft-Hartley law and the profound dangers to which free labor in America has been subjected by the return of 'government by injunction.' It exposes the Taft-Hartley law as a ruthless instrument of oppression to which the workers of America cannot and will not ever submit."

Condemning Senator Taft for his action in calling a meeting in his office of NLRB representatives and Chicago publishers, which preceded the NLRB contempt of court charge, Mr. Green demolished the Senator's argument that it was his duty to intervene in the affairs of the executive branch of the government in behalf of constituents. The AFL leader said:

"Senator Taft's constituency is the State of Ohio. The case he intervened in involves four newspapers published in Chicago, which, if my geography is correct, is located in the state of Illinois. Since when is the state of Illinois part of Senator Taft's constituency?

"It is true that one of the publishers present at the conference in Senator Taft's office also owns a newspaper in Akron, Ohio. But that Ohio newspaper had nothing to do with the case at hand. For that matter, Senator Taft and members of his family also own a newspaper published in Ohio. The very fact that Senator Taft has a financial interest as a newspaper owner makes it all the more improper for him to intervene in behalf of publishers against a union.

"There are even darker aspects to this picture. Everyone knows that Senator Taft was the sponsor of the Taft-Hartley Act. He had at his side during the conference the counsel for the Congressional 'Watchdog Committee' which has the power to make things hot for any public official it suspects of ineffective enforcement of the Taft-Hartley Act. Besides that, Senator Taft is the real leader of the majority forces in Congress and swings a good deal of weight. Under these circumstances, his 'general statement relating to the importance of prompt action in cases of this kind,' to use his own words, really amounts to outright intimidation of the two attorneys for the National Labor Relations Board to whom he spoke."

Calling upon all union members to register and vote this year, Mr. Green declared that the attack on the ITU is but one bit of evidence that "the 80th Congress, symbolized by Senator Taft, has no regard for the welfare of the people of this country, that it places the demands of big business far above human needs, and that it offers no hope of relief from high prices and the high cost of living."

Labor, Community Goals Inseparable, Says Truman

Atlantic City.—In a message of greeting to the 60th anniversary conference of the United Hebrew Trades, President Truman declared that "the best interests of labor and the good of the community are inseparable."

The Chief Executive's letter, which was made public by Ruben Guskin, president of the United Hebrew Trades and vice-president of the Associated Actors and Artistes of America, said:

"Labor has made solid achievements during the years since the United Hebrew Trades was founded. The standard of living has been greatly increased. Wages have risen. Working conditions have vastly improved. A substantial measure of job and old age security has been provided.

"The debt the American economy and American industrial leadership owes to labor in these achievements is recognized and acclaimed."

The organization, representing an affiliated membership of 600,000 trade unionists in New York City, presented a scroll of honor to the venerable, 88-year-old editor of the Jewish Daily Forward for his services to the United Hebrew Trades.

In his concluding paragraph, President Truman wrote:

"The organization has sound reason to feel proud of its contributions to the economy and to the improved position enjoyed by labor today. It has good reason, moreover, to look forward to greater gains in the future. Toward this end of greater security and happiness for working men and women everywhere, I wish the United Hebrew Trades many more years of constructive activity."

AFL Transit Workers Win Pay Increase; Pledge New Fight on Arbitration Law

Indianapolis.—Forced into compulsory arbitration under an antiunion Indiana law which labor is fighting as unconstitutional, the AFL's transit workers' union nevertheless emerged with a 9 percent raise and improved working conditions in its contract with the Indianapolis Railways, Inc.

Despite the victory, attributed by union officials to the airtight case pressed by the Labor Bureau of the Middle West, the Amalgamated Association of Street, Electric Railway and Motor Coach Employes of America will continue its fight to outlaw the arbitration statute, enacted in 1947.

Repeal of the antiunion measure is pledged by the Democratic candidate for governor in the current election campaign.

Opposition to the act is based on its injection of governmental force into industrial relations, O. David Zimring, director of the Labor Bureau and general counsel for the Amalgamated, declared.

"For over a half-century," he pointed out, "the Amalgamated has been a proponent of voluntary arbitration to settle all issues unresolved over the conference table.

"In Indianapolis itself, the same company and Division 1070 of the Amalgamated have enjoyed peaceful relations since 1936 with each contract providing for arbitration.

"How a compulsory arbitration law corrupts industrial peace, makes a mockery of collective bargaining and defeats the law's alleged purpose, is illustrated by the Indianapolis case.

"The 1947-48 contract expired May 1. Exactly three weeks later the new state law was invoked before genuine collective bargaining, the American way, had a chance of developing the outline of a new agreement, much less erupt into disputes demanding the entry of outside force in what is regarded by intelligent management as well as by labor, as an unwarranted exercise of state power."

The arbitration award, retroactive to May 1, represents a $500,000 gain for the 1,500 members of Division 1070. The 9 percent raise increases operators from $1.30 to $1.42 an hour. An increase of from 1 to 4 cents an hour, in addition to the 9 percent, was ordered for certain special classifications.

Another major gain is a remodeled paid vacation schedule immediately benefitting almost half the working force. Previously limited to 6 days vacation for 1 year of service and 12 days for 2 years, the unionists now also will receive 14 days after 5 years and 16 days after 15 years.

COLORED OLEOMARGARINE BARRED IN CONNECTICUT

Hartford. — Colored oleomargarine cannot be sold in Connecticut. Neither can it be "stored" here for shipment out of the state, the Attorney General's office ruled.

The opinion, prepared by Assistant Attorney General Joseph A. Hoffenberg, explained that since the storage of colored oleomargarine is equivalent to "offer for sale" in the statutes, such storage is thereby prohibited.

Note to Editors

A 5-column mat entitled "Are You a Good Citizen?" has been mailed under separate cover to AFL labor newspapers located in those states in which it is still possible to register for voting in the November elections.

All labor editors should cooperate in the AFL's campaign to obtain a large registration of voters by publishing this mat in their papers. All that is required is to insert the number of days remaining in the registration period, and to include the name of the city or town in which the paper is published.

ILGWU Educational Leaflets Spur Vote Registration Drive

By ARNOLD BEICHMAN
New York Correspondent for AFL News Service

New York.—A pair of arresting leaflets on the elections, entitled "You Can Earn $450 an Hour" and "Guilty—Who" have just been published by International Ladies Garment Workers 1948 Campaign Committee, 1710 Broadway, for mass distribution to the ILG's 390,000 members to spur registration and voting in the coming elections.

Get 'Em Off YOUR BACK

THE AIR IS FINE UP HERE!
BIG PROFITS
NEVER BEEN SO HIGH IN MY LIFE!
HIGH PRICES
I DON'T MIND AS LONG AS THE GUY UNDER ME DOESN'T!
80TH CONGRESS
THE PUBLIC
OH! MY ACHING BACK!

Smartly laid out with slogan copy, the first leaflet shows how failure to register and vote in the 1946 election, a failure which resulted in the election of the 80th Congress, resulted in higher living costs.

In May, 1946, an average family got by on $3,000. Today that same family must spend $3,900, which means it's out $900. The leaflet points out that in 1946, 3 out of every 10 voters registered and voted.

"The other 7 took the most expensive 2-hour vacation in history. The reactionary 80th Congress was elected by default. . . . Worker families in 1946 did not spend 1 hour to register, 1 hour to vote. That is why they have to spend $900 a year more to live today."

Under the slogan, "Register and Vote, It's Money in Your Pocket," the leaflet points out that election of a liberal Congress "will stop inflation, will maintain rent control, will build new homes, will protect your job and pay by repealing the Taft-Hartley law. All this means a better living for you."

The second leaflet asks: "Who is guilty of the High Cost of Living?" In question and answer form, the copy reads:

Q. Is European shipment responsible?

A. No! We shipped far more to Europe during the war years than we've been shipping since 1945, but the cost of living has jumped since the war's end.

Q. Are wages responsible?

A. No! Workers real wages per week have decreased. Little wage increases have been the excuse for big price increases For instance—U. S. Steel gave the workers increases of $162,500,000 but grabbed price increases totaling $588,953,000.

Q. Are swollen profits responsible?

A. Figure it out for yourself: Corporate profits for 1945 were $8,000,000,000; for 1946, were $12,500,000,000; for 1947, were $17,000,000,000 and will be even higher in 1948.

Q. Is Congress responsible?

A. Yes, it was the Republican-dominated 80th Congress that killed price control. In special session Congress refused to enact controls proposed by President Truman. Since then, prices grew wings.

Q. Are we, the voters, responsible?

A. Yes, we are responsible. Seven out of 10 voters failed to vote in the 1946 congressional elections. We elected the 80th Congress by failing to vote.

Circuit Court Ruling Upholds Union; Orders Bargaining on Retirement Plan

Chicago.—Retirement and pension plans must be submitted to collective bargaining negotiations by employers at the demand of unions, according to a unanimous decision of the United States Circuit Court of Appeals here.

In a second phase of the same case, the court upheld by a vote of 2 to 1 the constitutionality of the Taft-Hartley law's requirement that union officers file non-Communist affidavits to qualify their unions before the National Labor Relations Board.

The decision was handed down in an NLRB case involving the Inland Steel Co. and the CIO's United Steelworkers.

Judges Otto Kerner, Sherman Minton and J. Earl Major joined in the decision concerning the retirement and pension plans. Judge Major holding that the non-Communist oath section of the law to be unconstitutional, dissented from the majority opinion on that issue.

The case arose when the union demanded that it be given the right to bargain over the case of each employe eligible for retirement and to include the terms of the pension plan in collective bargaining as it related to all employes.

Contending that neither the question of retirement age nor pension privileges was in the field of collective bargaining, the company refused to discuss either with the union. The union appealed successfully to the NLRB, which ordered the company to bargain, but attached to its order the condition that the union's officers file non-Communist affidavits within 30 days.

The decision placing retirement and pension plans in the area of collective bargaining said that the "controversy has to do with the construction to be given or the meaning to be attached to the (language) 'for the purpose of collective bargaining in respect to rates of pay, wages, hours of employment, or other conditions of employment'."

"We are convinced that the language employed by Congress, considered in connection with the purpose of the act, so clearly includes a retirement and pension plan as to leave little, if any, room for construction," the opinion read.

"While, as the company has demonstrated, a reasonable argument can be made that the benefits flowing from such a plan are not 'wages,' we think the better and more logical argument is on the other side, and certainly there is, in our opinion, no sound basis for an argument that such a plan is not clearly included in the phrase 'other conditions of employment'."

The company held in its brief that a fixed retirement age was advantageous to employes because it gave advance notice of the time of retirement, eliminated disputes, provided incentive for younger men and applied alike to all employes.

"We are unable to differentiate between the conceded right of a union to bargain concerning a discharge, and particularly a nondiscriminatory discharge, of an employe, and its right to bargain concerning the age at which he is to retire," the opinion said.

In either case, the opinion said, the effect upon the "conditions" of employment was that employment was terminated and the "affected employe is entitled under the act to bargain collectively through his duly selected representatives concerning such termination."

In his dissent on the affidavit question, Judge Major pointed out that the law was directed not at unions as such, but at individual officers "each of whom has been empowered to stymie the entire bargaining process and thus deprive the union of its right to act as bargaining agent."

"And a single official can do this very thing by refusing to make the affidavit for any reason or no reason," he added.

Citing numerous decisions holding that the right of workmen to organize and select bargaining agents came from the Constitution, irrespective of any rights conferred by the Labor Relations Act, Judge Major's opinion described as "shallow" the reasoning that union members had in their own hands the power to select officers willing to sign affidavits.

INDIANS SUE GOVERNMENT, CLAIM SECURITY BENEFITS

Washington.—The federal government was sued by the National Congress of American Indians in an attempt to force Arizona and New Mexico to extend social security benefits to Indians.

The organization asked an injunction to "prevent" Secretary of the Interior Julius A. Krug, Federal Security Administrator Oscar Ewing, Secretary of the Treasury John W. Snyder and Comptroller General Lindsay C. Warren from "engaging in a conspiracy to deprive Indians in the two states of their civil rights."

HARD COAL MINERS RECEIVE $100 PENSION

Hazelton, Pa.—Distribution of $100 monthly pension checks began here when the first of the hard coal miners became eligible for retirement under the plan worked out by the United Mine Workers of America.

The pensions are to be paid to all mine workers who reached the age of 62 on June 1, 1946, after serving the coal industry for 20 years, if they elect to retire. The payments are made from the welfare fund built up by royalty payments made by the employers on the basis of 20 cents for each ton of coal mined.

Meany Appeals to Workers To Register, Vote This Year

Independent Labor Committee Predicts Democratic Senate, Big Gain In House

Washington.—A gain for the Democrats of 6 seats in the Senate and 30 in the House of Representatives was predicted here by George M. Harrison, director of Labor's Committee for Truman and Barkley.

The committee, which is not affiliated with the American Federation of Labor or Labor's League for Political Education, is an independent group of labor leaders.

Mr. Harrison's views were given reporters at a press conference here. His confidence that the control of the Senate would pass into Democratic hands was predicated on what he felt was a "ground swell" for the Democrats among the ranks of labor.

The labor spokesman is president of the AFL Railway Clerks Union, director of the Labor Division of the Democratic National Committee, a member of the Railway Union League for Truman and Barkley and also a member of the AFL Labor League's administrative committee.

Senate seats now occupied by Republicans would go to Democrats in West Virginia, Oklahoma, Idaho, Wyoming, Illinois, and Minnesota, according to Mr. Harrison.

His forecast of a gain of 30 seats by the Democrats in the House would make the two major parties about even in representation there.

Labor's Committee for Truman and Barkley was formed by Mr. Harrison recently because the governing officials of the AFL do not endorse presidential candidates.

A partial list of labor executives who have joined his committee, said Mr. Harrison, showed 40 of the topflight chiefs of labor unions, mainly of the AFL, but including also some railway unions. He was certain that nearly all the presidents of AFL unions would soon be members of his committee.

In response to a question on the poor showing made by President Truman in recent polls, Mr. Harrison declared that national opinion polls were "rigged" and "do not reflect the sentiment of the average American."

The principal issues in the campaign as Mr. Harrison saw them were the high cost of living, housing, repeal of the Taft-Hartley law, increase of minimum wages, liberalization of social security benefits, extension of the federal reclamation program and continuation of parity prices for farmers.

Prices Continue To Soar; BLS Reports On Increases

Washington.—The Bureau of Labor Statistics is still handing out doleful reports on the rapidly advancing cost of living. For the latest monthly period covered, ending August 15, the BLS said that its consumers' price index rose another 0.5 percent to a point 174.5 of the 1935-39 average.

Meanwhile in the wholesale price field, the bureau declared that for the week ending September 18 primary market prices reached another new postwar peak topping the previous records set during August.

Both reports add up to bad news for consumers who have had an increasingly difficult time to make ends meet. The consumers' price index report is of historical interest only. The wholesale price picture is the more significant, since it means that in all probability the increase in that field will be passed along to consumers in the form of still higher retail prices.

By mid-August, the BLS report said, the consumers' price index stood at a level 8.9 percent higher than a year ago; 30.9 percent above June, 1946; and 77 percent over the August, 1939, level.

The index rose during the month despite a drop in retail food prices. Apparel prices averaged 1.3 percent higher than in July; fuel, electricity and ice prices advanced 1.5 percent; miscellaneous goods and services jumped 1.1 percent; and rents and housefurnishings advanced fractionally over the month.

The decline in retail food prices, which interrupted a steady rise amounting to 7.2 percent over the previous 4 months, was primarily the result of more-than-seasonal declines in prices of fresh fruits and vegetables, offsetting seasonal increases in meats, dairy products and eggs. The retail food price index on August 15 was 216.6 percent of the 1935-39 average, 10.2 percent higher than a year ago, and 48.8 percent above the June, 1946, level.

The increase of 1.3 percent in the apparel price index over the month resulted primarily from higher prices for women's wool coats, suits and dresses, and nylon hose. Prices of cotton yard goods and men's and boy's cotton furnishings were lower on the average, reflecting declining costs of cotton fabrics.

Residential rents increased 0.3 percent, on the average, from July 15 to August 15, reflecting continued advances in all of the 12 cities surveyed. During the 3-month period since May 15, average rent increases ranged from 0.3 percent in Cleveland to 2.5 percent in Los Angeles.

AFL's Auto Workers Membership Poll Shows Margin for Truman Over Dewey

Milwaukee. — The AFL's United Automobile Workers of America announced the results of its 3d quarterly membership poll which showed that President Harry Truman is picking up strength among workers in his campaign for reelection.

In response to a question concerning their choice for President of the United States, UAW members gave Mr. Truman 83 percent of all votes cast and rolled up a 6-1 margin in his favor over Republican candidate Thomas E. Dewey. Henry Wallace eked out only 3 percent of the total vote to run a very poor last in the race.

According to the UAW announcement, the President's latest showing of strength was a distinct gain in his margin of victory over the previous 2 polls this year. The UAW interprets the results as evidence that Mr. Truman is gaining considerable strength all the time.

Another question in the UAW-AFL survey was, "What conditions of employment sought by unions do you value the most?" Of those voting, 33 percent selected strict seniority as the most important requisite of unionism. Thirty-one percent thought that a 100 percent union shop was the most important condition of employment. "Protection from discrimination" was third, with 13 percent of those surveyed selecting it. Increased wages barely nosed out demands for a pension plan, with 11 percent supporting the former as against 10 percent for the latter.

A third question sought the answer to "In your opinion, how could your union's strength and influence be used to further advantage other than in winning conditions of employment?" Sixty percent of those surveyed said they felt political action to insure the election of representative public officials should be of supreme importance in the disposition of union strength and influence. Thirty-three percent believed that collective purchasing power should be used to establish a better balance between wages and prices such as through the formation of consumer cooperatives.

RENT LAW EXTENSION NECESSARY, SAYS WOODS

Saratoga Springs, N. Y.—Tighe E. Woods, national housing expediter, said that federal rent controls should be continued because "the need for housing has not been met."

Opening a 3-day conference of executives of his agency, Mr. Woods declared the rent control law should be extended beyond its expiration date, March 31, "in spite of the fact that great progress has been made in the production of housing."

About 100 rent directors, chief attorneys and area representatives in Region 2 of Mr. Woods' office attended the session. The region comprises New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Delaware.

AFL on the Air

Listen each week to "Serenade for Strings," the AFL 15-minute radio show featuring an all-string orchestra under the direction of Glenn Osser and brief educational messages of interest to labor and the general public.

Time: Tuesday evenings at 10:45 p.m. EDT.

Network: American Broadcasting Co.

Consult your local newspapers for the exact time of the broadcast in your community.

LLPE Speaker Blames Nonvoters For Drive Against Labor

Washington.—George Meany, secretary-treasurer of Labor's League for Political Education, declared that it is the paramount duty of every union member first to register and then to cast his vote in the coming elections.

In an impassioned radio appeal to the American public and especially to all union members, Mr. Meany took as the theme for his address a statement made many years ago by Samuel Gompers, founder of the American Federation of Labor. Mr. Gompers said:

"No union member can be considered a good union member unless he is first a good citizen."

Declaring that the truth of Gomper's statement is more true today than ever before, Mr. Meany placed the blame for the antilabor crusade and the failure to enact social legislation in the Congress and in the state legislatures squarely upon the shoulders of the people of this nation who do not vote. He said:

"I could go on with national issues which are disturbing many people in this country, such as inadequate social security benefits, restrictive labor legislation, and the need for health insurance. In each case we must face the fact that the fault lies within ourselves, not in our elected representatives in Congress, that we are not getting the kind of government we want.

"We cannot get the kind of government we want by not voting. That way we get the kind of government other people want."

Mr. Meany decried the fact that the vast majority of the American people are "inclined to take their precious citizenship for granted" and have neglected both the privileges and obligations of such citizenship. He declared:

"Perhaps the highest privilege of American citizenship is the right to vote in a free election. That is also the highest obligation of citizenship. Upon the right to vote and the free exercise of that right, rests the whole foundation of our system of self-government. If our citizens fail to vote, democracy is bound to become a dead letter. Instead of self-government, instead of majority rule, we would then have rule by the minority.

"That is exactly what happened in the 1946 elections. Only one-third of the citizens of this country who were qualified to vote took the trouble to go to the polls and cast their ballots. They just couldn't be bothered, or they weren't sufficiently interested.

"Let's see what happened as a result. In 1946 a new Congress—the 80th Congress—was elected to office by one-third of the voters of America. That Congress was entrusted with the vital responsibility of transforming our nation from a wartime to a peacetime basis. For the past two years, that Congress has been passing new laws which govern all the American people. It has reversed many governmental policies which had been in effect for more than a decade and it has adopted new policies which affect the daily lives of every one of us."

Warning against the menace of Communism which threatens world peace and this nation's security, the LLPE spokesman said that voting is not only a privilege, "but a patriotic duty which cannot be shrugged off without peril to the future of our democracy."

"It comes down to this," Mr. Meany declared. "The security of the American way of life depends upon the vitality of American citizens. The price of continued freedom and democracy is good citizenship."

Calling upon every worker to recognize the wisdom of Gompers' statement, to see to it that he is qualified to vote, and to actually vote this year, Mr. Meany emphasized the tremendous stake which the workers have in this nation. He declared:

"It is the workers of the nation who will suffer most if another depression comes upon us due to the failure of Congress to solve our present economic difficulties. If war comes it is the workers and their families who will have to carry the greatest load both on the fighting front and on the production line. It is the workers of the nation who are today hardest hit by the failure of Congress to halt the terrific rise in food prices and to solve the nation's housing problem. It is the workers of the nation more than any other group who have the greatest stake in the future maintenance of our democratic way of life."

RANDOLPH REELECTED BY PULLMAN PORTERS

Detroit.—A. Philip Randolph was reelected president of the AFL's Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters prior to the close of the union's biennial convention here.

In other action the delegates to the conclave endorsed President Truman's civil rights program, and called upon all workers to defeat the Congressmen who voted for the Taft-Hartley law.